

Mary Christina Wood, Public Lecture, "Environmental Law for a New Ecological Age," Gonzaga University School of Law, Spokane, Washington (October 10, 2013)

Our planet faces extraordinary damage as we enter a new ecological age brought about by climate change. Humanity needs to protect the remaining resources essential to our survival. Yet instead of using environmental law to protect nature, regulatory agencies around the world now use the law to permit corporations and industries to inflict further damage to priceless resources. This imperils the future of our children and their descendants. Professor Wood's talk presents a fiduciary obligation on the part of government to safeguard ecology. She describes an ancient, yet enduring principle known as the public trust doctrine that designates government officials as trustees of public resources. Such officials remain charged with the legal obligation to protect and restore natural wealth belonging to citizens. Professor Wood will introduce her soon-to-be-released book, *Nature's Trust*, which provides a strategy to protect the Earth Endowment as the just inheritance for all citizens, those now living and those to come.